Auburn Water Utility
2001 Water Quality Report

Auburn's Water Quality

The Auburn Water Utility is proud to present you with our 2001 Water Quality Report. This report is a snapshot of last year's water quality. Included are details about where your water comes from, what it contains, and how it compares to standards set by regulatory agencies.

Auburn is fortunate to have a plentiful supply of good quality water. Our water comes from a combination of deep wells drawing water from below the City and springs located near the walls of the valley. Coal Creek Springs and West Hill Springs are located south of the White River and on the West Hill respectively. Seven of our wells are located in the Auburn valley and supplement water from the springs. Two additional smaller wells are located in the Lakeland Hills area and are used primarily to serve our customers south of the White River in the Lakeland Hills neighborhoods.

Corrosion Control Facility Under Construction

Required Health Information From The EPA

Health Issues

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)/Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the EPA's Safe Water Drinking Hotline (800-426-4791).

Contaminants and Regulations

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants (contaminants are something in drinking water other than water). The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More information about contaminants and potential health effects can be obtained by calling the EPA Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and, in some cases, radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Microbial contaminants, such as viruses and bacteria, may come from septic systems, livestock, and wildlife. Inorganic contaminants, such as salts and metals, can be naturally occurring or result from urban stormwater runoff, septic systems, or fertilizer use. Pesticides and herbicides may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, urban stormwater runoff, and residential uses. Organic chemical contaminants, including synthetic and volatile organic chemicals, are by-products of industrial processes and petroleum production, and can also come from gas stations, urban stormwater runoff, and septic systems. Radioactive contaminants, can be naturally occurring or be the result of oil and gas production and mining activities. In order to ensure that tap water is safe to drink, EPA prescribes regulations that limit the amount of certain contaminants in water provided by public water systems. Food and Drug Administration regulations set limits for contaminants in bottled water that are intended to provide similar protection for public health.

The Auburn Water Utility is part of the Public Works Department, which receives oversight from the Public Works Committee of the Auburn City Council. Regular Committee meetings occur on the second and fourth Mondays of the month, at Auburn City Hall at 5:30 PM. The public is welcome to attend.

For More Information

City of Auburn Water Utility	Water Utility Information	**(253) 931-3010**
25 West Main	Maintenance & Operations	**(253) 931-3066**
Auburn, WA 98001	Billing Information	**(253) 931-3038**
Other Information on Safe Drinking Water:	Washington State Dept. of Health	www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/dw
	Environmental Protection Agency	www.epa.gov/safewater

25 West Main
Auburn, WA 98001-4998

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For City of Auburn Water Customers

Water Quality Data Table

Auburn tests your water for over 100 physical, chemical and biological elements. Biological testing is done at 52 designated sites per month. The table below lists all of the drinking water contaminants that we detected during the calendar year of this report. The presence of contaminants in the water does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. Unless otherwise noted, the data presented in this table is from testing done in the calendar year of the report. The EPA or the State requires the City to monitor for certain contaminants less than once per year because the concentrations of these contaminants do not change frequently.

Important Drinking Water Definitions:

MCLG: Maximum Contaminant Level Goal: The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
MCL: Maximum Contaminant Level: The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
AL: Action Level: The concentration of a contaminant which, when exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.

Contaminants	MCLG	MCL	Your Water	Range	Sample Date	Violation	Typical Source/Comments
Inorganic Chemicals							
Asbestos (MFL)	7	7	1	ND - 1	10/20/99	No	Decay of asbestos cement water mains, natural deposits.
Fluoride (ppm)	4	4	0.3	ND - 0.3	2001	No	Natural deposits.
Nitrate (ppm)	10	10	4	ND - 4	2001	No	Natural deposits, fertilizer, septic tanks.
Microbiological Contaminants							
Total Coliform (% Positive samples / month)	0	5%	10% (12 out of 120 samples)	0 – 10%	June 2001	**Yes** See "Violations" below	Naturally present in the environment. System flushing and increased chlorine levels corrected this problem in the Lea Hill Service Area.
Total Coliform (% Positive samples / month)	0	5%	2% (1 out of 52 samples)	0 – 2%	March 2001	No	Naturally present in the environment. Repeat samplings were satisfactory (no coliform present).
Radioactive Contaminants							
Beta / photon emitters (pCi/L)	0	50	3	ND – 3	2001	No	Decay of natural and man-made deposits. The EPA considers 50 pCi/L to be the level of concern for Beta particles.
Volatile Organic Chemicals							
cis-1,2-Dichloroethylene (ppb)	70	70	0.6	ND – 0.6	2001	No	Discharge from industrial chemical factories.
Styrene (ppb)	100	100	1.1	ND – 1.1	10/9/00	No	Discharge from rubber and plastic factories; leaching from landfills.
Tetrachloroethylene (ppb)	0	5	2	ND – 2	2001	No	Discharge from factories and dry cleaners.
Trichloroethylene (ppb)	0	5	1.9	ND – 1.9	2001	No	Discharge from metal degreasing sites and other factories

WAIVER: Auburn Water Utility was granted a waiver by the Washington State Department of Health for Synthetic Organic Chemical (pesticides and herbicides) monitoring based on an evaluation of our water sources. This waiver covers all sources except West Hill Springs and is effective from 1999 - 2001.

Units Description:
ND: Not detected
ppm: parts per million, or milligrams per liter (mg/l)
ppb: parts per billion, or micrograms per liter (µg/l)
pCi/L: picocuries per liter (a measure of radioactivity)
MFL: million fibers per liter, used to measure asbestos concentration
% Positive samples / month: Percent of samples taken monthly that were positive

Violations

Total Coliform

Auburn tests a minimum of 52 sites throughout our system per month for coliform. Coliforms are bacteria that are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially harmful, bacteria may be present. In June of this year, coliforms were found in more samples than allowed and this was a warning of potential problems. One sample indicated that fecal coliform was present, but repeat samples at that site indicated no coliform present. No E. coli bacteria were reported in any of the samples. No source of contamination was determined; system flushing and increasing the chlorination level corrected the problem.

Copper

The water you receive does not contain measurable levels of copper. However, copper can leach into your water from building plumbing systems. Copper monitoring of homes with copper plumbing was last conducted in 1993. Monitoring results indicated the copper concentration value exceeded the Action Level, which required treatment improvements. We are currently constructing two corrosion control facilities, which will adjust the pH of Auburn's water and minimize leaching of copper from our customer's water fixtures. These facilities are expected to be operational in 2002.

Copper is an essential nutrient, but some people who drink water-containing copper in excess of the action level over a relatively short amount of time could experience gastrointestinal distress. Some people who drink water-containing copper in excess of the action level over many years could suffer liver or kidney damage. People with Wilson's Disease should consult their personal physician. If you have copper plumbing you can reduce your copper levels by not drinking or cooking with water from your hot tap and by letting your water run a few seconds (until noticeably cooler to the touch) before using it.

Conserving Our Valuable Water Resource

Auburn currently has enough water to meet our maximum demand, yet it is apparent that growth will one day create demands that may exceed the availability of water in the region. In cooperation with all the other water utilities in the region, we encourage our customers to use water wisely.

Cross Connection Control Program: Protecting Our Water System From Contamination

A cross connection is a connection between water pipes and a source of contamination. Examples of cross connections include hose ends submerged in pools, hot tubs or buckets, irrigation systems and most hose-end spray applicators. Cross connections are extremely dangerous because they provide opportunities for contaminating fluids to be pulled back into the water system. To protect our water supply; avoid using hose-end sprayers, maintain an air gap by keeping the hose end above the water surface when filling containers, and install a backflow assembly on irrigation systems. Backflow assemblies require a plumbing permit, must be inspected by a cross connection specialist, and must be tested by a certified tester when installed, and yearly thereafter. For more information or a list of certified testers call the Water Division at 253-931-3064.